

REMARKS

Applicant requests favorable reconsideration and allowance of the subject application in view of the preceding amendments and the following remarks.

To place the subject application in better form, the specification and abstract have been amended to correct minor informalities. No new matter has been added by these changes.

Claims 5, 7, 8-10, and 12-20 are presented for consideration. Claims 5, 7, 8, and 12 are independent. Claims 1-4, 6, and 11 have been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer. Claims 5, 7, 8, and 12 have been amended to clarify features of the subject invention, while new claims 13-20 have been added to recite additional features of the subject invention. (The Examiner will note that claims 13-16 and claims 17-20 have been patterned after claims 2-4 and 6, respectively.) Support for these changes and these claims can be found in the original application, as filed. Therefore, no new matter has been added.

Applicant notes with appreciation that claims 8, 9, and 12 have been allowed over the art of record, and that claims 5, 7, and 10 were indicated as containing allowable subject matter and would be allowed if rewritten in independent form. In an effort to expedite allowance of this application, claims 5 and 7 have been rewritten in independent form to include the recitations of their respective base claim, namely claim 1. Accordingly, Applicant submits that independent claims 5 and 7 are also now allowable. In addition, claims 13-16, depending from claim 5, and claims 10 and 17-20, depending from claim 7 likewise should be deemed allowable. Such favorable indication is requested.

Applicant requests favorable reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections set forth in the above-noted Office Action.

Claims 1, 3, 4, 6 and 11 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as being unpatentable over U.S. patent application publication number 2002/0085184 to Amano in view of U.S. patent application publication number 2004/0105085 to Suzuki. Claim 2 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as being unpatentable over the Amano publication in view of the Suzuki publication and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,614,503 to Uzawa. These rejections are respectfully traversed. Nevertheless, as discussed above, to expedite allowance of this application, claims 1-4, 6, and 11 have been cancelled herein. Accordingly, the foregoing rejections have become moot and should be withdrawn.

All pending claims being allowable, Applicant submits that the instant application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration, withdrawal of the rejections set forth in the above-noted Office Action and an early Notice of Allowance are requested.

Applicant requests that the Examiner contact his undersigned representative should any matters be deemed outstanding precluding allowance of the subject application.

Applicant's undersigned attorney may be reached in our Washington, D.C., office by telephone at (202) 530-1010. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our address given below.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Steven E. Warner", is written over a horizontal line.

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